

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to recite that liquid A and solution B are mixed together in a liquid-liquid state based on, for example, the Examples of the specification.

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sueyoshi et al. (JP 4-0308137) in view of Ogawa et al. (U.S. Patent 4,135,016).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons of record and for the following reasons.

The Examiner takes the position that Sueyoshi teaches "to allow fine powders to be well dispersed," and thus, there is motivation to utilize any of the equivalent techniques as described in Ogawa.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

It is respectfully submitted that the Sueyoshi is directed to producing a magnetic coating solution by a specific process, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not include ultrasonic dispersing of Ogawa in Sueyoshi.

In Sueyoshi, a mixed solution of a magnetic material and a solvent is preliminary dispersed by a rotary-type dispersing machine (homo mixer) and a bead mill dispersing machine, and the magnetic material and the binder solution are mixed by kneading after drying the magnetic material. In other words, in Sueyoshi, the magnetic material and the binder are mixed by kneading the magnetic material, which is in a solid state, and the binder solution, which is in a liquid state.

In contrast, in claims 1 and 6, mixing of the magnetic material and the binder is achieved by mixing the liquid A containing the magnetic material and the solution B (a liquid) containing the binder in a liquid-liquid state using an ultrasonic dispersing machine.

The difference between the mixing step of the present invention and the mixing step of Sueyoshi is a result of the fact that the mixing mechanism is different between mixing using a kneader and mixing using an ultrasonic dispersing machine. Specifically, in mixing using the kneader, the magnetic material and the binder are kneaded by a mechanical shearing force, and mixing is promoted when the solid concentration in the liquid is high. This is because the shearing force due to the blades of the kneader does not give much effect when solid concentration in the liquid is low.

On the other hand, since mixing using the ultrasonic dispersing machine is mixing that utilizes a crushing effect due to cavitation, the mixing is not promoted when the solid concentration in the liquid is high.

Therefore, when mixing of the magnetic material and the binder is performed using a kneader that requires high solid concentration in the liquid as in Sueyoshi, one of ordinary skill in the art could not adopt and use an ultrasonic dispersing machine, which requires low solid concentration in the liquid as in Ogawa. That is, in the invention of Sueyoshi, sufficient dispersion of fine powder is intended by adopting a specific process, and thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not modify the process of Sueyoshi by using an ultrasonic dispersing as in Ogawa.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine Sueyoshi and Ogawa.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-3 and 6 are patentable over the cited art.

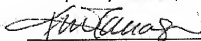
In addition, claims 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sueyoshi in view of Ogawa, and further in view of Ikeuchi, and claims 5 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sueyoshi in view of Ogawa, and further in view of Akashi et al.

Each of claims 4-8 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 or 6, and thus, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1 and 6. In addition, Ikeuchi and Akashi do not make up for the deficiencies of Sueyoshi and Ogawa.

For the above reasons, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8 is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Keiko K. Takagi
Registration No. 47,121
Date: March 14, 2007

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER